

THE BIG PICTURE IN STARTUPS, INVESTING, AND LIFE.



Bio

Nicole is an entrepreneur, an executive, an investor, a board director, an advisor, a parent, a wife, a daughter, a traveler, a lover of all things outside, and a friend. Nicole got her entrepreneurial start in the 4th grade, orchestrating cousins into theatrical plays and charging neighbors admission. While earning a master's degree in sport psychology at the University of Florida, Nicole co-founded a tech startup that retailed products to the property management industry, which was the best education a young entrepreneur could hope for. It was there she developed her lifelong passion for entrepreneurship, technology, performance coaching, and seed-stage investing.

She took her experience starting a company and applied it to CTEK, an incubator in Colorado supporting tech startups in 2002, before accelerators existed. She helped grow CTEK from 1 to 5 offices across the state and was an early catalyst in developing the startup ecosystem in Colorado. Most recently, she was the Chief Investment Strategy Officer at [Techstars](#) – a global network and investor in early-stage web software startups. She was employee 1 or 2 (which we're still arm wrestling over), helping build the company around her and rising from a Managing Director to Chief Product Officer, Chief Innovation Officer and Partner. She was instrumental in its growth from one office in Boulder, CO to a global powerhouse, featuring 45 investment offices in 18 cities worldwide, events in over

500 cities globally, with ~ \$750M in capital under management, over 3000 companies in the portfolio growing at over 500 per year, with a collective market cap over \$77B. Through Techstars she's raised over \$100M managed and deployed early-stage venture capital, and invested in over 100 startups, many of which she still supports to this day.

In addition to her role at Techstars, she was one of the earliest investors in, and subsequently on the board of directors for [Pana](#) through its acquisition by Coupa Software, [Simple Energy](#) which ultimately merged with Tendril to form Uplight, [GreatHorn](#) through its acquisition, and [Nextbite](#). Previously she's been on the boards of the [National Venture Capital Association](#), the [Application Developer's Alliance](#), [Pledge1Percent Colorado](#), the [Leeds School of Business at the University of Colorado](#), and most recently the [Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, Denver Branch](#). She was named one of the [Coolest People in New York Tech](#) and an [Extraordinary Woman in New York Tech](#) by Business Insider, Marie Claire named her one of the [NewGuard](#), and Entrepreneur Magazine named her [One of the Most 7 Powerful Women to Watch](#) and was featured in the [Denver Business Journal](#). She's been featured on [CNBC](#), [Inc.com](#), and [Huffington Post](#), and her talks have been featured at SXSW, TEDx, WebSummit, [Pioneers Festival](#), [Arctic15](#), the University of Colorado, [Real Leaders](#), [@WomenatForbes Mentoring Moments](#), and many more. And her favorite, she's been labeled the "[Mother of Dragons of Startups, reigning over the entrepreneurial realm with the same fire and grace](#)"

Currently, Nicole is a venture partner at [Matchstick Ventures](#), a seed-stage venture capital firm investing in technology startups between the coasts. She is also the founder of Phos, which invests in early-stage technology-based startups, and the co-founder of [ForDenverFC](#), an effort to launch a women's professional soccer team in Colorado, which ultimately became the [Denver Summit!](#) She also serves on the [Vitalant](#) Board of Trustees and the boards of two venture funds including [One Way Ventures](#) and the [Greater Colorado Venture Fund](#). Additionally, with a background in sport psychology, and as an executive, operator, entrepreneur, and investor, Nicole has taken on a small handful of executive and performance advising roles.

Nicole blends the strategic with the tactical and loves pushing her own limits and the limits of those around her. She's been a competitive swimmer, triathlete, and [boxer](#). She's summited Mt. Rainer, is a [NOLS](#) graduate, has guided adventure travel trips, and knows

enough about backcountry medicine to make her dangerous. She loves traveling to places radically different than home and mourns the spread of western culture across the globe. She lives the mantra #GiveFirst and does one philanthropic thing every year, and is always looking for new ways to learn, grow, and help others.

When not working with startups, you'll find Nicole smothering her husband and two kids with kisses, hiking, biking, skiing, playing volleyball, practicing martial arts, reading, traveling, and lamenting how little time there is to do everything she loves.